



Tortworth VC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109180
Local Authority South Gloucestershire
Inspection number 296127
Inspection date 17 October 2006
Reporting inspector Mo Roberts HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Charfield Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Tortworth
Age range of pupils	4-11		Wotton-under-Edge GL12 8HG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01454 260510
Number on roll (school)	68	Fax number	01454 260510
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	M Pirie
		Headteacher	S Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small, rural Voluntary Controlled school for pupils aged four to eleven. Some pupils live on the Tortworth Estate and others come from the surrounding villages; they have a wide range of backgrounds. There are 68 pupils in three mixed age classes. Approximately a third of pupils have special educational needs; this is higher than the national average. The number receiving free school meals is close to the national average. A small but varying number of pupils enter each year. This means that statistical data on the school should be treated with caution. A very small number of pupils are learning English as an additional language. There is independent pre-school and after-school club provision on the site.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Tortworth VC Primary School is a good and effective school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their education and they are encouraged to explore and to celebrate the school's beautiful site. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' well-being. Pupils are encouraged to take plenty of exercise and to eat healthy food. The curriculum is good and includes high quality music, art and modern foreign language programmes. Pupils learn about their place in the world and have links with a school in Russia. The school has a clear set of values. Pupils accept them and are exceptionally well behaved. They are keen to help each other solve any problems that may arise. Everyone is fully included in all activities, with pupils given a fair chance, no matter what learning difficulties or disabilities they may have. The care and guidance provided for pupils are good. All staff diligently follow up any special requirements including, where necessary, the formation of strong partnerships with outside agencies.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is proactive in involving parents and the community in the work of the school. The school hosts community events and family learning projects so that parents and grandparents can support pupils' learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is monitored regularly. However, classroom observations do not focus in quite enough detail on the learning of the various groups in the mixed-age classes. Most pupils make good progress, achieving well from their individual starting points. The size of the intake varies widely year on year, as does the level of attainment when pupils enter. One pupil can sometimes represent 25% of the school's national test score. Standards are average when such factors are taken into account

Pupils' personal development is good. They get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. Each pupil is well known to staff and has clear targets for learning throughout the school. However, the detail recorded about the progress towards the targets from year to year is not always fully analysed. Consequently, not all subsequent targets are sufficiently finely tuned. The governing body keeps a watchful eye on the school and is currently training new members so they can play a full part in the evaluation process. The school's self-evaluation is broadly accurate, although the headteacher is unduly modest about the quality of leadership and pupils' achievement. The school demonstrates a good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- refine the analysis of individual pupils' progress to ensure targets are always accurately set
- sharpen the focus of the monitoring of teaching and learning to make sure all groups of pupils in the mixed-age classes are given the best possible opportunities to make progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are broadly average. The published test results need careful interpretation, owing to the high levels of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and the small class sizes. The 2006 results in English, mathematics and science show that a high proportion of pupils achieved beyond the level expected at Key Stage 2. Boys did especially well in reading. Results for Key Stage 1 show that this year group were broadly in line with national averages. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make very good progress from their starting points as do those learning English as an additional language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This is a real strength of the school. Pupils clearly enjoy their school and can tell you why. The extensive range of activities helps promote good personal, moral, social, and cultural development, evidence of which is seen in the vibrant displays of work around the school. During the inspection, an imaginative assembly gave the youngest pupils a special start to the day with a discussion about why they are priceless! Pupils are taught to value different cultures through a range of opportunities. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary both in lessons and around the school. The use of a specialist sports coach is having a positive impact on progress and behaviour for some of the pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Older pupils enthuse about helping each other solve problems on the playground. They also enjoy the opportunity to reflect in the 'peace garden'. Tortworth pupils do and say things with care and live out the values adopted by the school. Pupils know about being safe. Recent changes to make the car park safer have been led by the pupils' ideas. They benefit from high quality lunches provided on the school site. Pupils enjoy a range of varied sports activities, often linking with other schools. The school has worked hard to improve attendance but there is still more to be done. Pupils have good opportunities to make a contribution to the community through activities such as the May Day festivities. Their future economic prospects are satisfactory as they are prepared appropriately for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned, with the majority of the work well matched to pupils' needs. Interactive whiteboards are used to good effect, drawing the pupils into the lessons. Good attention is paid to the pupils' preferred style of learning. Those in the Foundation Stage are given plenty of opportunities to make choices and to be active. Small, well focused groups, led by teaching assistants,

provide good help to those who find some aspects of learning difficult. Time is used effectively and resources have been chosen with great care to support the extra activities. The outdoor environment is used extensively to reinforce learning. The staff are good at adapting the work to capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The recent artwork on sculptures of trees is a good example of this. Pupils are encouraged to take a pride in their work. They work well together and enjoy the opportunities to learn in joint projects with other small schools.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a rich and expansive curriculum to match the needs of Tortworth pupils. The diversity of the curriculum, which includes French, has a positive effect on learning. The planning of the curriculum is managed well. Links made across subjects include the use of ICT. This promotes exciting and relevant learning enjoyed by all pupils. Occasionally, opportunities for promoting independent learning are missed.

Music is a real strength of the school, with timetabled ocarina lessons for most pupils. The wide range of extra-curricular activities includes dance, gardening, and choir. Pupils remark, 'Everyone goes to something!'. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is good, with some outstanding features. The headteacher in her role as the school's special needs co-ordinator ensures that the curriculum very successfully meets the needs of this group of pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The relevant procedures are in place to support and safeguard pupils. All adults in the school know the children exceptionally well and take time and care to address their needs. Pupils feel safe in school and say they are comfortable. Any problems are dealt with swiftly. The school has gone out of its way to develop strong links with families. This enables pupils to get the most out of their learning. The highly skilled learning support teachers, alongside the teachers, help pupils to make good progress. Marking of work assists pupils to improve through comments and questions. Pupils are motivated by targets and older pupils have a strong sense of themselves as learners. This helps them to strive for their targets. Resources are good and include games which help develop basic skills. Pupils are encouraged to undertake some self-assessment but this strategy is not, as yet, fully developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for developing the school. The school improvement plan establishes appropriate priorities and sets out methods and timeframes for achieving them. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is judged as satisfactory because it could only be seen in an early

draft form. This was due to computer problems prior to, and during, the inspection. The governors are led by an experienced chairperson and they support the school satisfactorily. Many are too new to act as 'critical friends' to the school at this stage. They take their responsibilities for health and safety seriously and carry out good risk assessments. The experienced teachers within the school have undertaken management training and fully participate in running the school. Equal opportunities are exceptionally well promoted and discrimination is tackled so that all learners can achieve well.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to say thank you very much for giving the inspectors such a warm welcome. We enjoyed spending the day in your school. Your school is a happy place and your school dinners are healthy and delicious! We liked talking to you and hearing what you had to say. Tortworth School is a good school.

These are some of the special things we found out about your school:

you enjoy your lovely site and are proud to be pupils of Tortworth School your behaviour is excellent and everyone in school cares for you you work hard in lessons, learning lots of interesting things those of you who find your learning 'tricky' are especially helped to succeed your teachers help you to make good progress you like coming to school and everyone takes part in all the exciting clubs on offer during and after school you are healthy eaters and keep fit by taking lots of exercise you have good teachers and a good headteacher.

So that your school does even better, we have asked your teachers to make sure your targets are exactly right for you. When your headteacher watches your lessons, we have also asked her to look closely at each group to see if you are all doing your best.

You can help as well by making sure you attend school every day.